

AKIRA

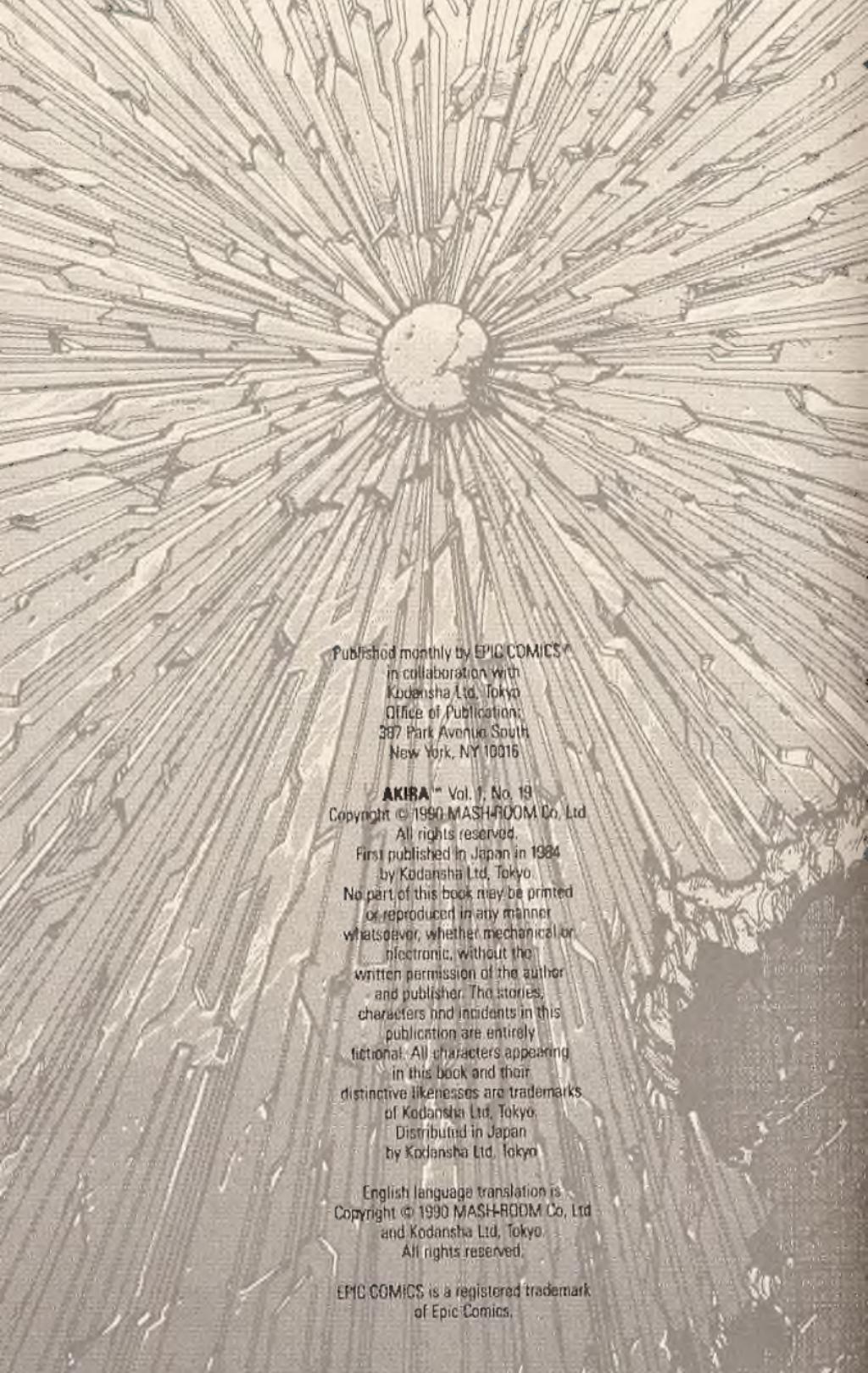
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KATSUHIRO OTOMO

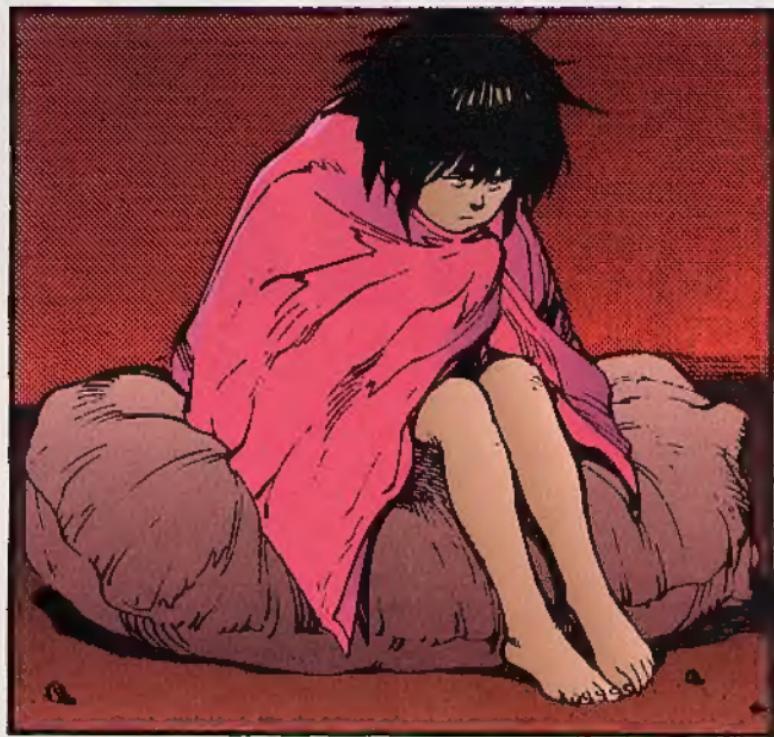


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AKIRA

BY KATSUHIRO OTOMO

Chapter 19

TO SAVE THE CHILDREN

WHAT HAS GONE BEFORE

Twenty-thirty. The world stands poised at the edge of World War IV. An explosion of thermo-nuclear proportions has been set off in **Neo-Tokyo**. The world, particularly the superpowers, wonders what has happened. In **Neo-Tokyo**, in a section known as the "old city", a band of teenaged delinquents led by **Kaneda** encounters **Number 26**, a child named **Takashi** who used extraordinary telekinetic abilities to injure **Tetsuo**, one of Kaneda's close friends.

As a result, **Kaneda** and **Tetsuo** become entangled in a power struggle between a mysterious military and scientific organization led by the **Colonel** and an underground resistance group bent on putting a stop to the **Colonel's** activities.

Among the resistance, **Kaneda** meets **Kay**—a girl he alternately maddens and tries to seduce—**Kay's** "brother" **Ryu**, and a formidable woman named **Chiyoko**. Other important resistance leaders include Ryu's superior—the opposition leader **Nezu**—and

a powerful religious with precognitive gifts, **Lady Miyako**.

The **Colonel** has a number of psychic children like **Number 26** under his control. Each child possesses a distinct set of psychic talents and is identified by a number marked on the hand. At one time **Lady Miyako** was **Number 19** in this series. **Number 28** is **Akira**, so powerful that since the war he has been suspended in cryogenic sleep.

The **Colonel's** staff conducts experiments which awaken tremendous telepathic potential in **Tetsuo**, who is redubbed **Number 41**. Able to shrug off the most serious injuries, **Tetsuo** goes on a killing spree, murdering one of Kaneda's friends and even attacking **Kaneda**. Then, followed by **Kay** and **Kaneda**, **Tetsuo** sets out in search of **Akira**, whose powers he thinks may rival his own.

Even in hibernation, **Akira's** power responds to **Tetsuo's** psychic energy. When **Tetsuo** reaches **Akira's** resting place, the cryogenic chamber cracks from within and **Akira**—dazed and docile following his long sleep—emerges.

Terrified of what may occur, the **Colonel** summons the powerful SOL military satellite



Chiyoko



Kaori



Lt. Yamada



Tetsuo



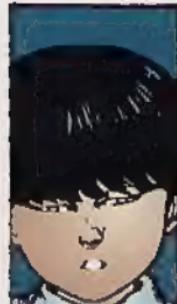
and orders that its laser cannon be fired at **Tetsuo** and **Akira**, who are separated by the blasts. **Akira** is saved by **Kay** and **Kaneda**, but **Tetsuo** is less fortunate. The laser strikes his left arm.

Neo-Tokyo is placed in a state of military emergency following the disaster. "Caretaker robots" patrol the streets, dealing harshly with looters and restoring order. The **Colonel** uses the emergency as an excuse to hunt down and destroy his enemies. With the aid of his inner circle, the **Colonel** stages a successful coup d'état.

Nezu, planning to exploit **Akira** for his own purposes, kidnaps the child and orders his staff to kill **Kaneda**, **Kay**, and **Chiyoko**, who manage to escape and free **Akira**. He is, however, stolen from them again, this time by young psychics headed by **Sakaki** and

trained by **Lady Miyako**, who now knows that **Nezu** has betrayed her. The **Colonel**, with his troops and his psychic children, is also frantically trying to find **Akira** before he fully awakens. **Sakaki** hides **Akira** in a dumpster. There he is found by **Ryu**—one of the few people who doesn't recognize the child. **Ryu** and **Akira** encounter **Nezu**, who blurts out the boy's name. **Ryu** realizes that his former master is a traitor. When **Nezu** tries to kill them, **Ryu** guns him down and leaves him for dead.

Ultimately, **Sakaki**, **Ryu**, **Akira**, **Kaneda**, **Kay** and **Chiyoko** are surrounded by the Colonel's troops. **Sakaki** is killed trying to escape, but all seems well when **Takashi** fondly greets **Akira** and reintroduces him to their fellow psychics **Kiyoko** and **Masaru**. Then **Nezu**, dying and determined for revenge, arrives and tries to kill



Akira



Tetsuo's Aide



Ryu



Masaru

Akira, killing **Takashi** instead.

The trauma of Takashi's death galvanizes **Akira**, who fully awakens and unleashes a light blast powerful enough to devastate the entire city. Acting quickly, **Masaru** and **Kiyoko** sweep most of the people in the area upward, into the shelter of a skyscraper. **Kaneda** is last seen vanishing toward the sky. In the wake of the disaster, **Lady Miyako** opens her temple and offers shelter and comfort to those in need.

Afterwards, as **Akira** sits alone, telekinetically playing with bits of rubble, **Tetsuo** finally reappears. **Neo-Tokyo** is completely cut off from the rest of the outside world, and in the western part of the city the **Great Tokyo Empire** is formed—a monarchy with **Akira** on the throne and **Tetsuo** as his prime minister. Together the pair use their powers, healing the sick, wielding control of the faithful, and organizing their subjects into fighting units that destroy caretaker robots and conquer military and medical relief parties sent from the outside world. In addition, **Tetsuo** conducts deadly tests on special followers, hoping to find more psychics fit for training. The **Empire** is eventually infiltrated by teams of spies sent from the outside to learn what is

happening inside the city.

Masaru and **Kiyoko** are sick with withdrawal from the drug which augments and channels their psychic powers, and **Kiyoko** tells **Kay** to find **Number 19**. They meet with **Lady Miyako**, who gives them medicine to help **Kiyoko** and **Masaru**, and asks that **Kay** bring the other psychics to her when they are well.

Most of the spies from the outside are hunted down by a clairvoyant, and killed by other chemically created psychics. Only their leader, **Lt. Yamada**, kills one of the monsters and escapes. Tetsuo's followers are on the verge of catching him again, when **Ryu**—who has been depressed and drinking heavily following the recent deaths of many of his friends in the resistance—appears and leads him into the safety of an underground shelter.

Meanwhile, Tetsuo's aide picks three pretty girls out of the Empire's breadline for what he thinks will be a fatal orgy.

Tetsuo orders them to swallow diluted, recreational strength capsules of the mind-altering drugs. As the orgy begins, so does an odyssey into Tetsuo's mind, and he relives his past, recalling moments of his friendship with the cocky, maddening **Kaneda**.



The Colonel



Kiyoko



Seer



Kay



YOU DIDN'T
TAKE YOUR
PILL, DID
YOU?



I'M... I'M
SORRY.
MY FATHER
IS SO
SICK...

I SAVED THE
MEDICINE
FOR HIM.

WHAT'S YOUR
NAME?



ME... ?



KAORI... I'M
KAORI.

KAORI,
HUNH?

WAIT
HERE.



IT WAS
YOUR
DOING,
WASN'T
IT,
AKIRA?

THEY SAID
OUR POWERS
RESPOND TO
EACH OTHER...
I MUST HAVE
SYNCHRONIZED
WITH YOU BY
ACCIDENT.

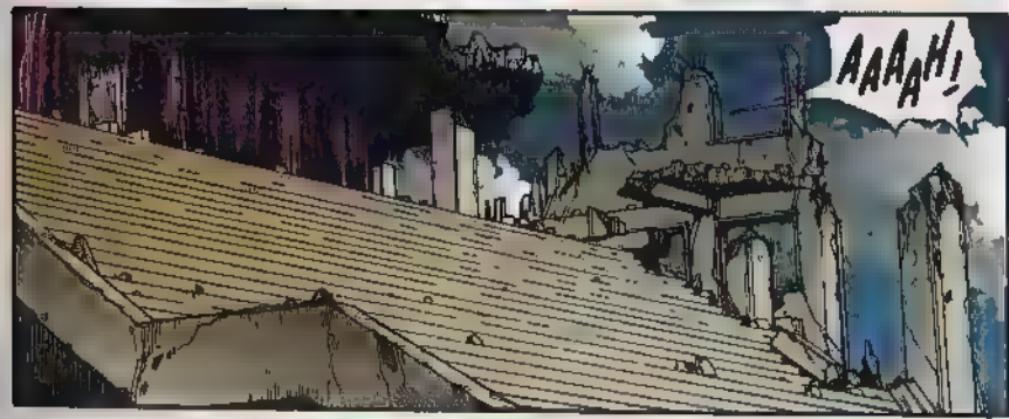
PAD

SCARED
THE SHIT OUT
ME.

BUT WHAT MADE
IT HAPPEN NOW,
WHEN IT NEVER HAS
BEFORE?

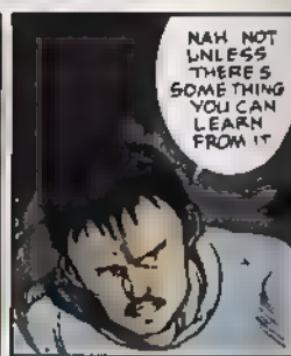
THIS TIME
I SAW FOR
MYSELF
WHAT'S
GOING ON
IN THAT
HEAD
OF
YOURS.











LAST WEEK

THE SOVIETS
TOOK CONTROL
OF NORTHERN
JAPAN.

THERE WAS A FACEOFF
BETWEEN THE RUSSIAN
AND JAPANESE NAVAL
FLEETS IN THE
STRAITS OF TSUGARU.

A MONTH AGO THEY
APPOINTED A PROV-
ISIONAL GOVERNMENT,
BUT IT'S STRICTLY
TEMPORARY AND NOT
SET UP TO RUN THINGS
FOR LONG.

WHAT ABOUT
THE AMERICANS?

THEIR FLEETS
IN JAPANESE
WATERS,
TOO...

...BUT THEY'RE
KEEPING THEIR
DISTANCE

BUT THEY HAVE TO
INTERVENE! WHAT
ABOUT OUR
TREATY?!

THEY
ARE AFRAID
OF AKIRA.

SEEMS THEY'D GATHERED
SOME INTELLIGENCE
ABOUT THE PROJECT,
BUT THEY WEREN'T
TAKING IT
SERIOUSLY...

...TILL THEY
SAW WHAT
HAPPENED
TO NEO-TOKYO.
THEY'RE SCARED,
AND I DON'T
BLAME
THEM.

YOU
MEAN...

...NEO-TOKYO
HAS BEEN
COMPLETELY
ABANDONED?!

EXCEPT FOR
AKIRA.



WHAT'S IT TO
YOU?



I'M
THE ONLY ONE
LEFT.

COME ON, LET
ME HELP YOU.
WHAT CAN IT
HURT?

SORRY, I DON'T
ADD PEOPLE TO
MY STAFF WITHOUT
A JOB INTERVIEW.

VERY
EFFICIENT.
WHERE
SHOULD I
SEND MY
RESUME?

WASHINGTON?

IT'S A HOPELESS
TASK FOR JUST
ONE MAN.

CAN'T
YOU SEE
THAT?

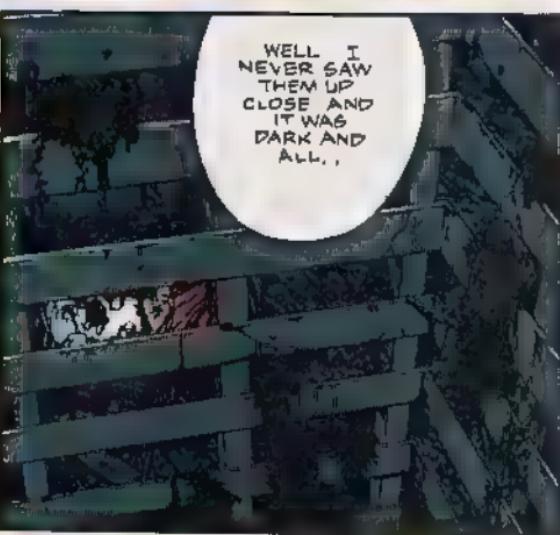
WHAT'RE
YOU CALLED,
ANYWAY?

RYU.



AND EVERY TIME
I TRY TO TALK TO
HIM, ALL HE'LL
SAY IS GO AWAY











YOU JUST SAW
THE ONE GUY,
RIGHT, KAY?

SOMETHING
FEELS
WRONG.

BUT HE'S THE
ONLY ONE
WE'VE SEEN.

YEAH...

SHALL WE WAIT FOR
NIGHTFALL?

IF
WE'RE GOING TO
GO, THEN
THE SOONER,
THE BETTER.

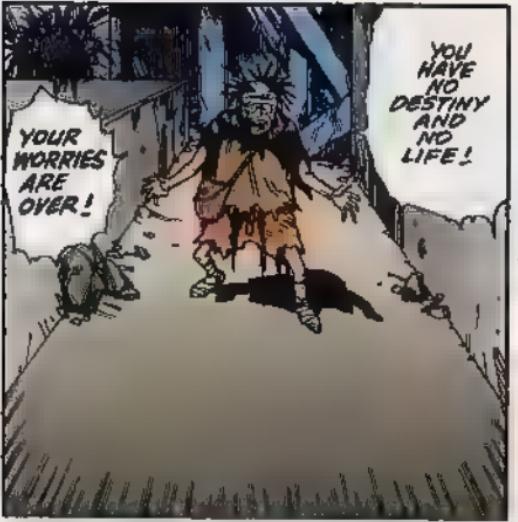
THE
KIDS
SHOULD BE
AL-
RIGHT FOR
A
WHILE

IF WE'RE DESTINED
TO MEET AGAIN, WE
WILL.

BUT WHAT
ABOUT
RYU? HOW
WILL HE
KNOW WHERE TO
FIND US?

HE'S A GROWN
MAN, HE CAN
TAKE CARE OF
HIMSELF.

YES,
BUT...



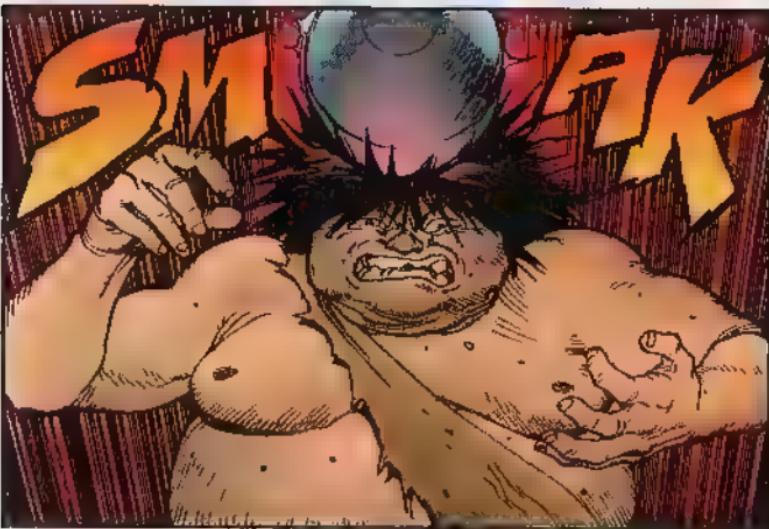
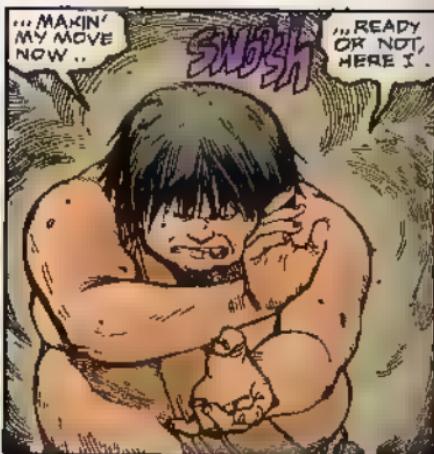
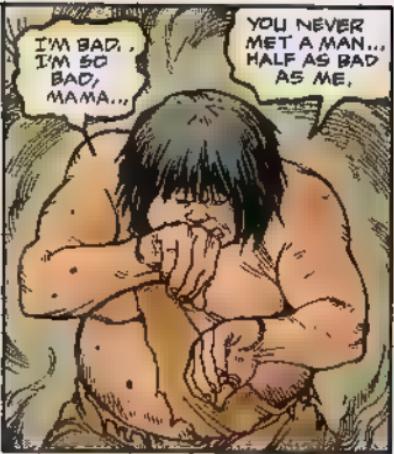
YOU MUSTN'T DO ANYTHING TO
UPSET THOSE KIDS OR
STIMULATE THEIR POWERS!

KEEP
THEM
AWAY
FROM
AKIRA!

IT'S TOO LATE
FOR ADVICE!

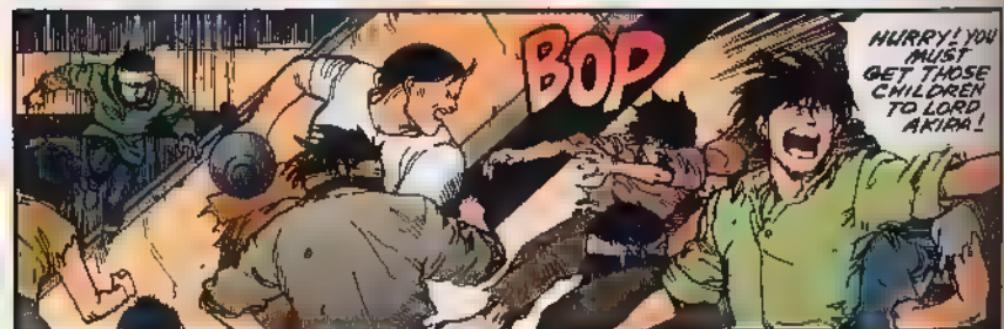
OUR
FRIENDS ARE
CARRYING
THEM OUT
OF HERE
RIGHT
NOW!

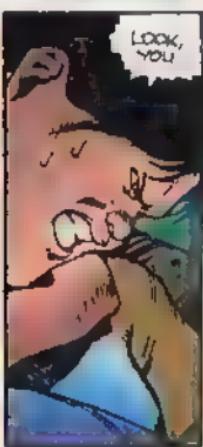




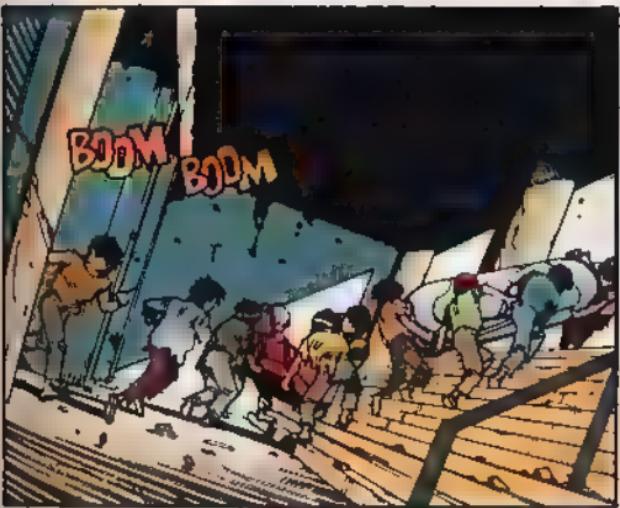
BOOM!





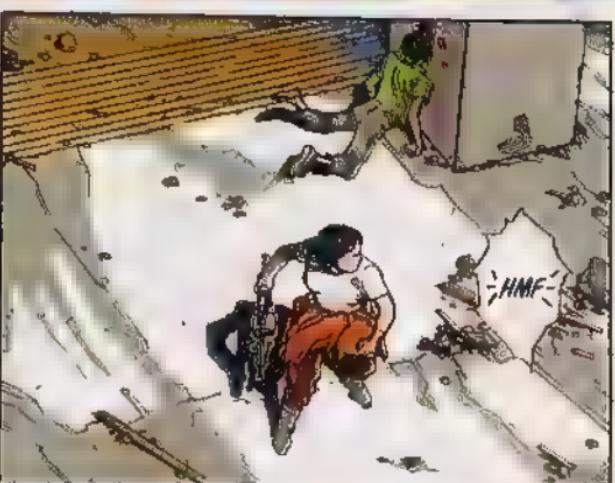






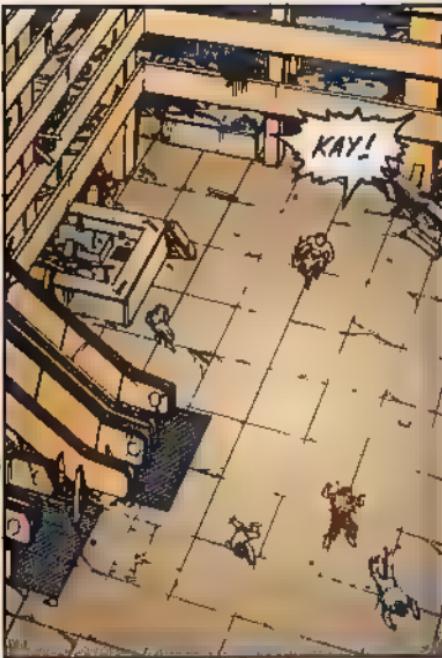
HELP.

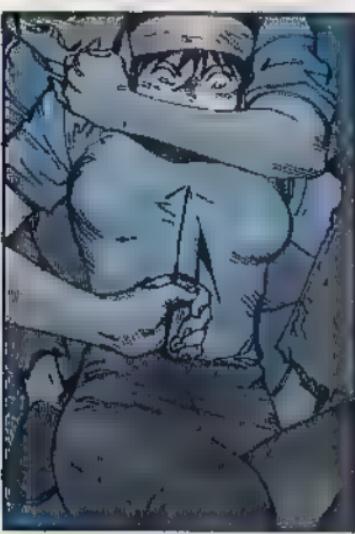


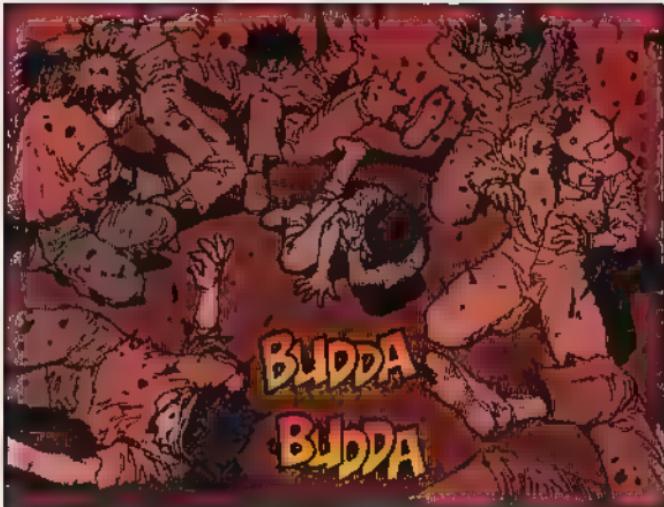
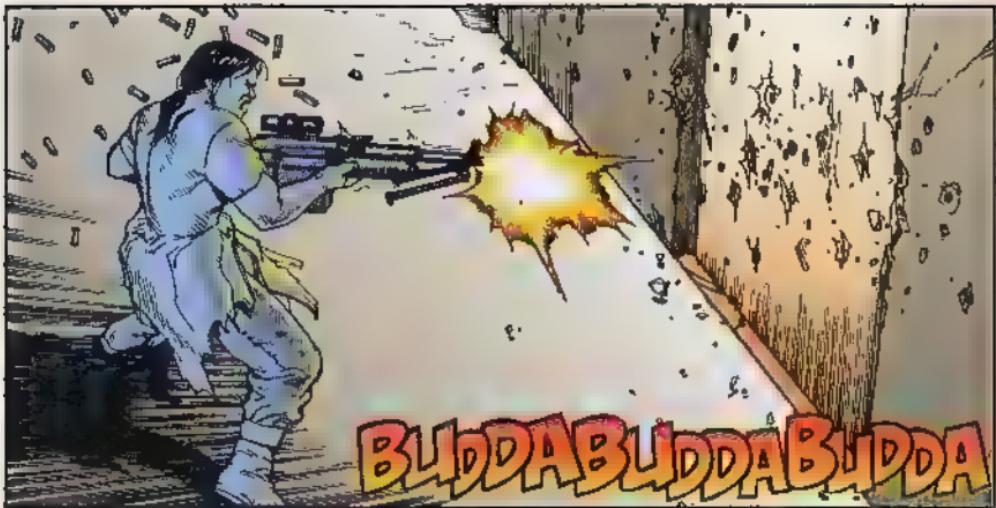






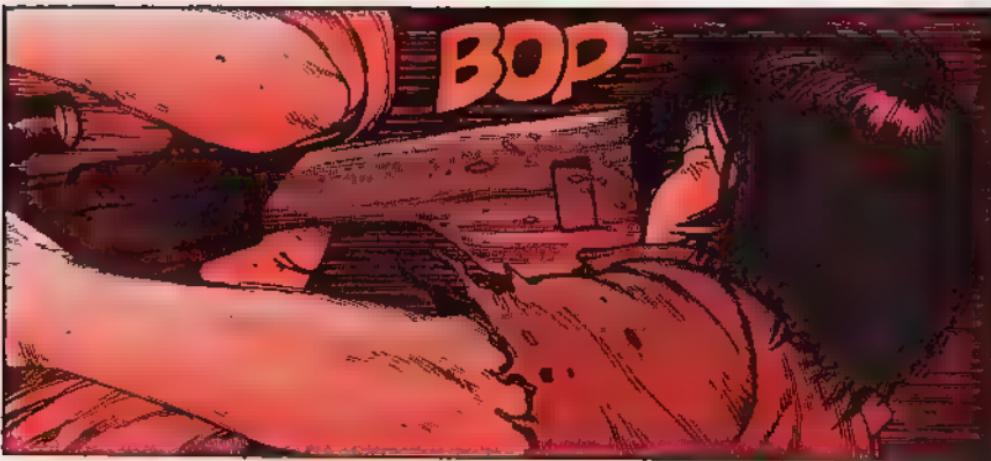








BOP



**BUDDA
BUDDA**



Klatter



KAKLAK



YOU OKAY?

NEVER
MIND
ME,
YOU'RE
HURT





CHIYOKO!



TAKE HIM
TO LADY
MIYAKO

I'M GOING
TO GET
THE OTHER
ONE BACK.

I CAN'T LET YOU GO
ALONE! YOU'RE
HURT! THEY MIGHT
KILL YOU!



SO? WE CAN'T
JUST LEAVE HIM
HERE ALONE, YOU
KNOW.

THINK
ABOUT
WHAT'S
GONNA
HAPPEN
ONCE THAT
DRUG WEARS
OFF.

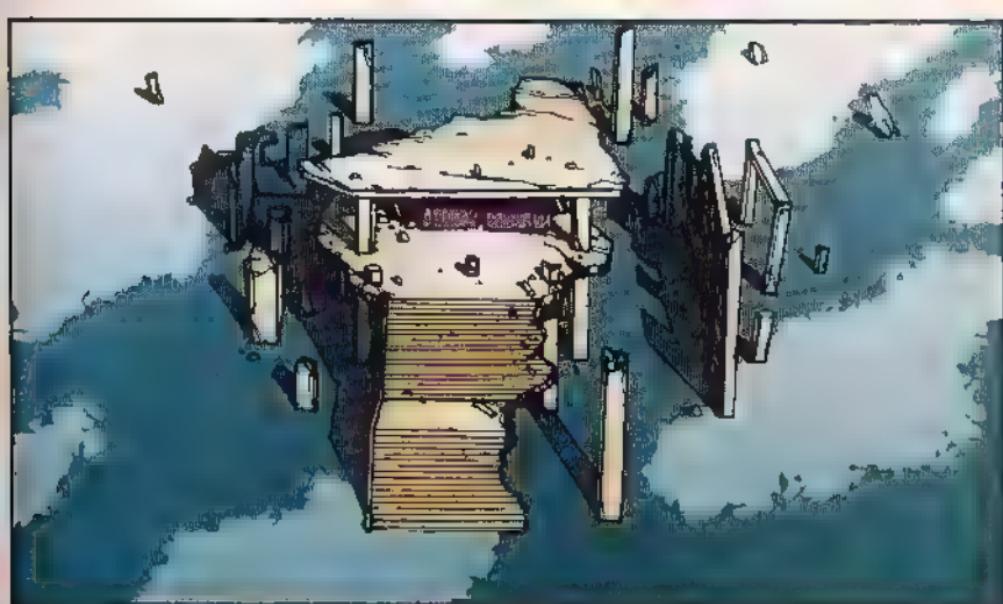


AND THAT
GIRL'LL
BE IN
THE
SAME
SHAPE.

WE'VE
RUN OUT
OF
OPTIONS.







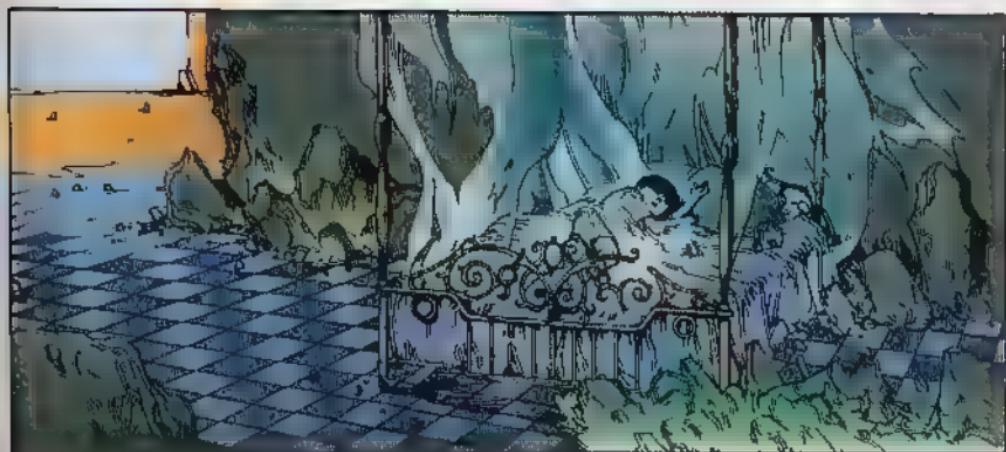
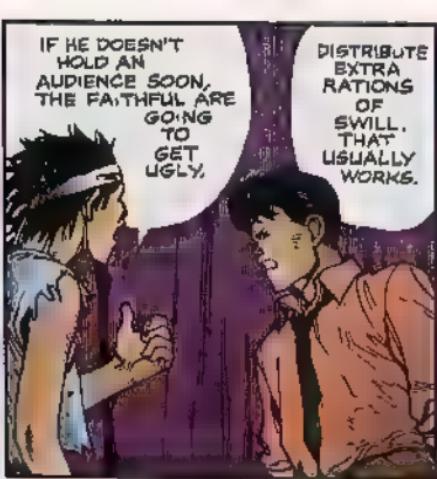
I HEAR HE APPEARS BEFORE THE FAITHFUL TWICE A DAY.

I WANT TO GET A GOOD LOOK AT HIS FACE



CAN'T YOU AT LEAST LOOK LIKE IT TASTES GOOD?



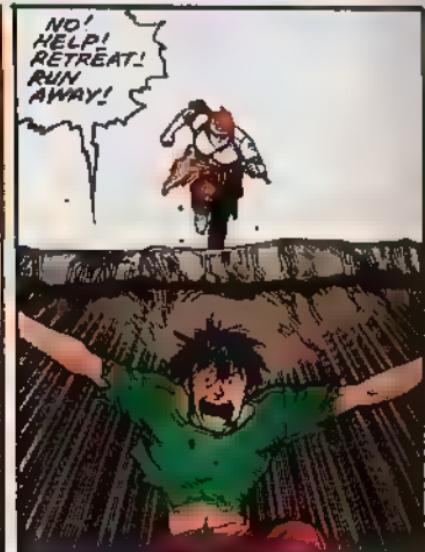








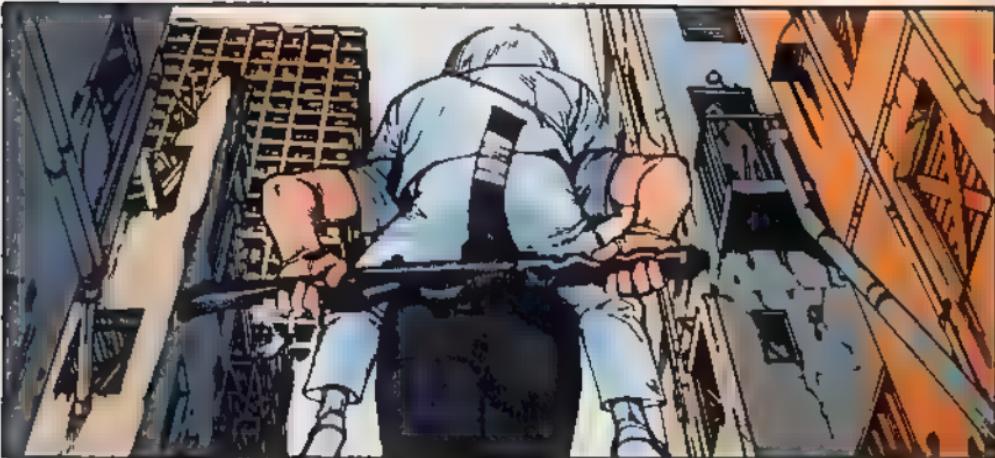




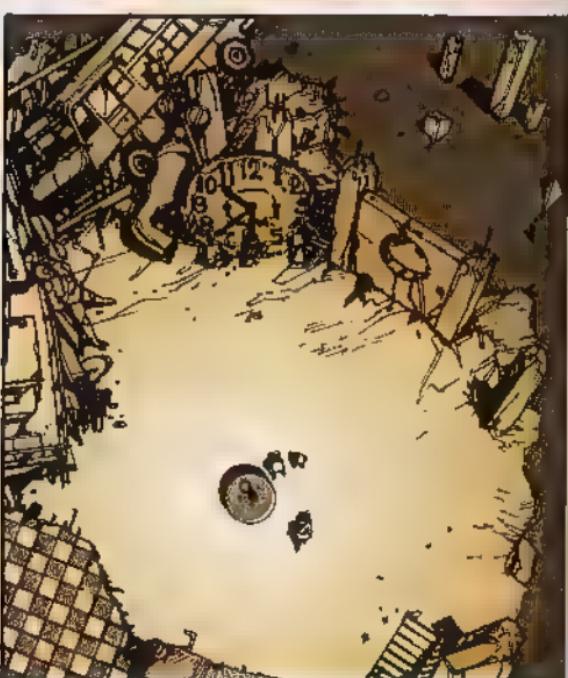
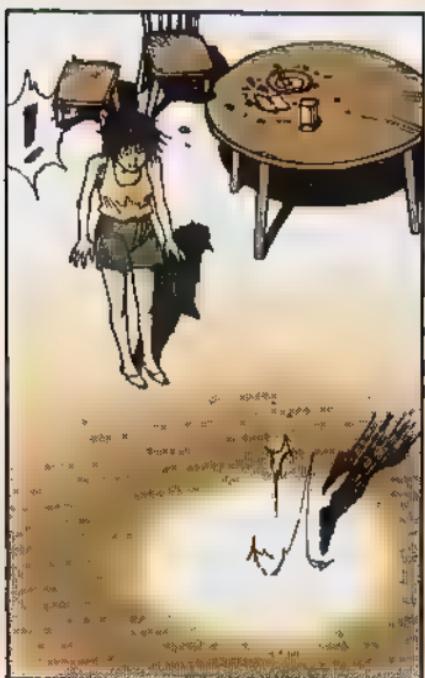
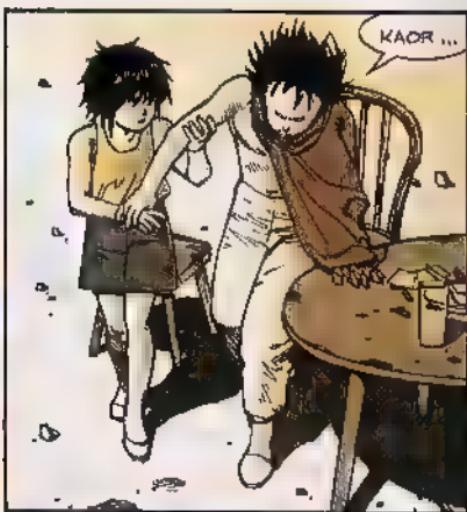




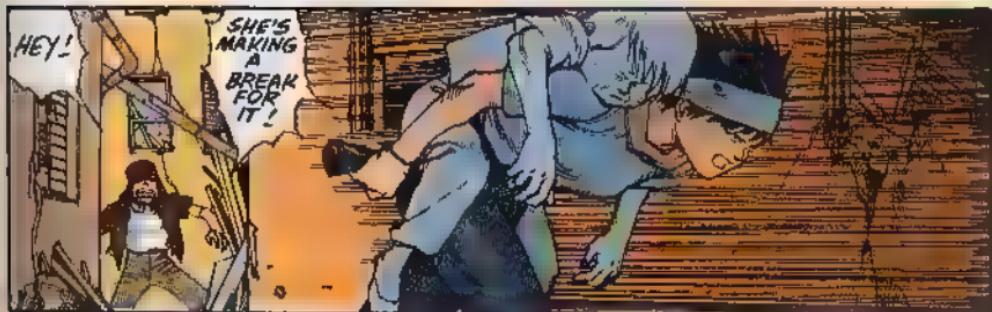
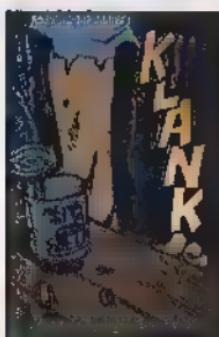


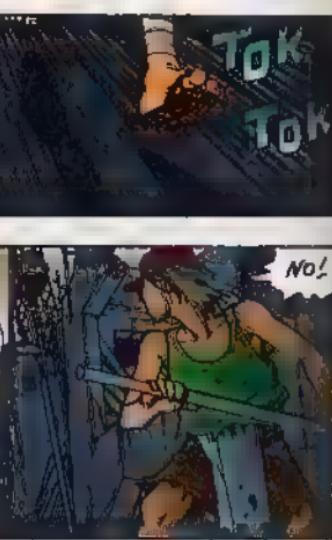
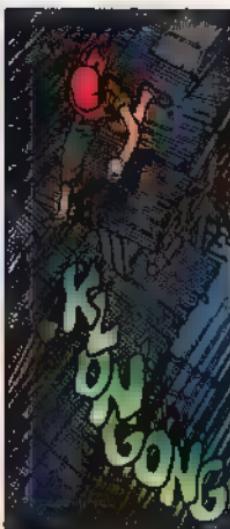




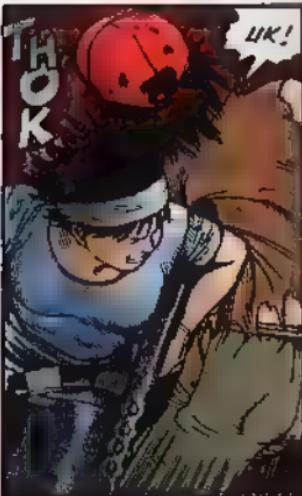


Kreak









NEXT ISSUE: REVELATIONS

Neo-Tokyo is about to E • X • P • O • L • O • D • E



AKIRA

Based on the Graphic Novel by KATSUHIRO OTOMO

Art Director TOSHIHARU MIZUTANI • Chief Animator TAKASHI NAKAMURA •
Scenario IZO HASHIMOTO • Music SHOJI YAMASHIRO • Producer RYOHEI SUZUKI
Character Design / Script / Direction KATSUHIRO OTOMO

Released by STREAMLINE PICTURES

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Akira, the animated feature film based loosely on the **Akira** comic, has been playing at many repertory and art cinemas around the U.S. for the past few months. Readers who have seen the film know that although the comic and movie are similar in characterization and atmosphere, there are vast differences in the storyline. Drastic plot changes were made in order to accommodate thousands of story pages into a two hour movie. Also, the comic itself is not yet complete in Japan, leaving even **Akira's** Epic Comics staff unaware of the eventual route the ending will take.

Now, courtesy of Epic Comics, Streamline Pictures and your local comic book store, **Akira** fans who read the comic AND attend the movie, can receive a free 11x17 poster! The poster, printed in red, black and white, advertises **Akira** #16 and the second devastation of Neo-Tokyo.

Check the list below for this month's **Akira** playdates. Remember to save your ticket stub! Take this stub, along with a coupon available from your local comic book store with the purchase of an **Akira** comic, to participating comic stores and you will receive an **Akira** poster as long as supplies last.

For more information on when **Akira** will be playing near you, the Streamline Pictures "Making of Akira" videotape, or on the Streamline Pictures lobby poster shown on the previous page, write to STREAMLINE PICTURES, P.O. BOX 691418, WEST HOLLYWOOD, CA 90069.

Confirmed showings of **Akira** during the month of April are as follows:

Salt Lake City, UT
Cinema In Your Face
March 30—April 5

Chicago, IL
Music Box Theater
March 30—April 5

Hinsdale, IL
Hinsdale Theater
April 6—April 12

Pittsburgh, PA
Fulton Theater
April 6—April 15

Honolulu, HI
The Academy Theater
April 20—21

Cleveland, OH
The Cleveland Cinemateque
April 26—29

Akira will play in San Luis Obispo, CA during the month of May, and will play New York City during the summer.

KATSUHIRO OTOMO

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chief assistant to Mr. Otomo

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SATOSHI TAKABATAKE
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AKIRA SAITO
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MICHAEL HIGGINS
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STEVE ALEXANDROV
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MARIE JAVINS
assistant editor

MARGARET CLARK
editor

CARL POTTS
executive editor

Heartbeats race in Neo-Tokyo this day, staccato rhythms that shape the lives of the city. It's a rhythm of unease, when Ryu attempts an alliance with a mysterious figure who may or may not be an American spy. It's a rhythm of madness, with the malevolent forces surrounding Akira eager to extend his empire. And it's a rhythm of hope, as Chiyoko and Kay fight to make their way to the safe refuge of Lady Miyako, the lives of the children Masaru and Kiyoko hanging in the balance...

KATSUHIRO OTOMO'S

AKIRA



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